

UNIVERSITY EXAMINATIONS 2012/2013 ACADEMIC YEAR
EXAMINATIONS FOR THE DEGREE OF EXECUTIVE MASTER OF BUSINESS
ADMINISTRATION - *SEMESTER: 1*

COURSE CODE: EMBA 505

COURSE TITLE: BUSINESS RESEARCH METHODS

DAY&DATE: MONDAY 20TH AUGUST 2012 **3 HOURS. TIME:** 9.00 A.M. – 12.00 P.M.

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

Answer **FOUR** questions. **QUESTION ONE IS COMPULSORY AND ANY OTHER THREE.** All Questions carry equal marks. (25 Marks).

QUESTION 1

Read the following passage and answer the questions that follow.

The mobile phone market in a particular country has realized tremendous growth in subscriber rollout over the last seven years, and has seen subscriber base reach 15 million as at January 2012. The continuous quick growth in customer base requires continuous improvements on both the network and customer care services to adequately meet the changing customer needs. Customer satisfaction is the assessment of the performance of a product or service by customers and is important for successful business performance.

Despite significant investments on complex modern technologies to improve the technical communications network and customer care services, complaints continue to be raised by customers on the quality of customer services offered. Some of the complaints include network congestion, call drops, billing issues and poor customer care services. Indeed the general concern of the public is that not enough is being done to address their problems. This trend is likely to have negative effect on the sector that may lead to loss of customer confidence, poor business performance, job losses and other negative effects on both the society and sectors of the economy. The purpose of this study is therefore is to assess the factors affecting customer satisfaction.

Required

- (a) Suggest a suitable topic for the above statement of the research problem (3Marks)
- (b) What is the problem being investigated? (4 Marks)
- (c) Construct appropriate research questions for the above problem (4 Marks)
- (d) Construct appropriate research objectives for the above problem (4 Marks)
- (e) What is the unit of analysis in the study? (2 Marks)
- (f) Explain the appropriate sampling design for this study (8 Marks)

QUESTION 2

A company based in Nyeri is seeking to introduce a course that covers cadres of its staff. The Company CEO has got wind that you have recently done a course on sampling during the Executive Master of Business Administration course at MUA in 2012. Using your knowledge of sampling, explain how the following approaches may be used to pick a sample of 284 respondents from a staff population of 1420.

- (a) Simple random sampling. (6 Marks)
- (b) Systematic random sampling. (9 Marks)
- (c) Stratified random sampling. (10 Marks)

QUESTION 3

- (a) Rewrite the following passage as part of a critical literature review using the APA system of referencing. (13Marks)

"From what I have read, the English language teaching market (ELT), which this company serves, remains attractive for publishers despite a decline in growth as this quote shows: "Overall, the ELT materials market has continued to show growth, because, globally, the demand for English learning persists, albeit on a lower growth track than in 1980s¹. The latest published statistics that I have been able to find (1999) tell us that there are 1300 million ELT learners worldwide². I therefore think that the need for good ELT authors is growing and, as Francis says: "the name of the author remains a critical success factor and an important sub-brand in many cases"³

Reference

¹R. Francis, "Youngsters rive ELT growth", Bookseller, 23 May 2003, p. 26

²Gasson, C. (ed), Book Publishing in Britain (London: Bookseller Publications, 1999)

³R, Francis “ELT publishing” p.93 in C. Gasson (ed), Book Publishing in Britain (London: Bookseller Publications, 1999) pp. 86 – 104. (Adopted from Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2009)

(b) Convert the following concepts into variables and indicate the decision rule

(i) Poor (6 Marks)

(ii) Academic achievements (6 Marks)

QUESTION 4

(a) You are having considerable problems with finding relevant material for your research when searching online databases. Suggest possible reasons why this might be so.

(5Marks)

(b) A research student conducted a study to investigate the nature of the relationship between specific attributes of rural and urban dwellers In Kenya. He designed a questionnaire, and used stratified sampling to pick a sample of 115 respondents. The information gathered from the company was prepared in Excel spreadsheet and transferred to SSPS version 11.0 for analysis.

The table below provides information related to the characteristics of the sample. Make a brief comment on these characteristics (10 Marks)

Statistics

		AGE	SALARY
N	Valid	115	115
	Missing	0	0
Mean		28.1043	3139.4604
Median		26.0000	500.0000
Mode		25.00	500.00
Std. Deviation		9.10790	8042.181
Variance		82.95393	6.5E+07
Skewness		2.573	4.201
Std. Error of Skewness		.226	.226
Kurtosis		17.127	18.905
Std. Error of Kurtosis		.447	.447
Range		88.00	48000.00
Minimum		.00	.00
Maximum		88.00	48000.00

i. Using your knowledge of Pearson correlation matrix comment on the relationship between sex and the salary earned. (10Marks)

Correlations

		area of residence	AGE
area of residence	Pearson Correlation	1	-.128
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.171
	N	115	115
AGE	Pearson Correlation	-.128	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.171	.
	N	115	115

QUESTION 5

- (a) The director of human resources of a manufacturing firm wants to offer stress management seminars to the personnel who experience high levels of stress. He conjectures that three groups are most prone to stress compared to other employees: the workmen who constantly handle dangerous chemicals, the foremen who are held responsible for production quotas, and the counselors who, day in and day out, listen to the problems of the employees, internalize them, and offer them counsel, with no idea of how much they have really helped the clients.

Explain the appropriate sampling strategy that the director can use if she wants to get a feel for the experienced level of stress within each of the three groups and the rest of the firm? (10 Marks)

- (b) You are working in an organization that has branches throughout the country. The managing Director is mindful of the fact that managers of the branches need to talk over common problems on a regular basis. That is why there have always been monthly meetings. However, she is becoming increasingly concerned that these meetings are not cost-effective. Too many managers see them as an unwelcome intrusion. They feel that their time would be better spent pursuing their principal job objectives. Other managers see it as a 'day off': an opportunity to recharge the batteries. She has asked you to carry out some research on the cost-effectiveness of the monthly meetings. You have defined the research question you are seeking to answer as '*what are the managers' opinions of the value of their monthly meetings?*' Your

principal data collection method will be a questionnaire to all managers who attend the monthly meetings.

- (i) To what extent is the use of the questionnaire effective in this case especially when one is keen to triangulate these findings? (5 Marks)
- (ii) How would you collect data that would answer the research question more effectively (10 Marks)

QUESTION 6

A research student sought to understand how a questionnaire is designed. He identified a questionnaire that had been used earlier on a study and extracted the following set of questions as shown in the abbreviated questionnaire below:

Personal information	
1. Name of the respondent:_____	
2. Are you a male or female (please tick)?:	Male Female
3. How old are you? _____years	
4. What is you level of education?:_____	
5. Are you employed (please tick)? Yes No	
6. If yes, in which Company?_____	
7. What is your job level_____	
8. What is your level of income?_____	
9. The following table summarizes the importance of your current job:	

Job Characteristic	
The opportunity provided by the job to	Ranking of importance
1. Interact with others	
2. Use a number of different skills	
3. Complete a whole task from beginning to end	
4. serve others	
5. Work independently	

Job Characteristic					
	Strongly Disagree=1	Disagree=2	Neither agree nor disagree=3	Agree=4	Strongly agree=5
1. Interact with others	1	2	3	4	5
2. Use a number of different skills	1	2	3	4	5
3. Complete a whole task from beginning to end	1	2	3	4	5
4. serve others	1	2	3	4	5
5. Work independently	1	2	3	4	5

10. The following statements seek to get a feel of the effectiveness of the respondent on his/her current job:	
(a) I feel I have been able to accomplish a number of different things in my job.	
1. Strongly agree	
2. Agree	
3. Disagree	
4. Strongly disagree	
(b) I do not feel I am very effective in my job.	
1. Strongly agree	
2. Agree	
3. Disagree	
4. Strongly disagree	

Using your knowledge of questionnaire design answer the following questions:

- (a) In the section of the questionnaire relating to personal information identify any mistake which have been made by the questionnaire designer? [1Marks]
- (b) Using your knowledge of coding show how you may code information contained in questions 2-5. [4 Marks]
- (c) Identify and explain in detail the appropriate scales applicable in the following questions:
 - (i) Question 2 [3Marks]
 - (ii) Question 3 [3Marks]
 - (iii) Question 9 [3Marks]
 - (iv) Question 10 [3Marks]
- (d) Identify the rating scale used in questions 5 and 10a. [4Marks]
- (e) Using your knowledge of questionnaire construction, explain the form of questions 10a and 10b. [4Marks]